

ROCK COMIX

Propelled by the success of "Do the Bartman," the ground-breaking, compelling Simpsons Sing the Blues went double-platinum in record time.

But the group stalled on their follow-up. Insisting on creative control, Bart recorded an 18-minute ballad, "Hey Dude (Take a Sad Song and Sell Some T-shirts)"

The constant studio presence of Bart's skateboarding bud, Calvin, contributed to mounting tensions within the family.



Then it was discovered that when "I Am the Bartman" was played backward you could hear "Suck an egg, bald man." Fans searched for "Homer is dead" clues.

Lisa developed a dependency on Flintstones multivitamins. Bart confessed to smoking Butterfinger wrappers. The nation was shocked.

When Bart lip-synched the national anthem at a monster truck rally, it was revealed that the Simpsons couldn't play or sing. Bart and Calvin's Two Juggins signaled the breakup.

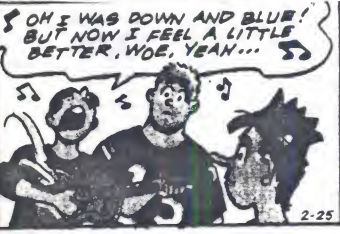
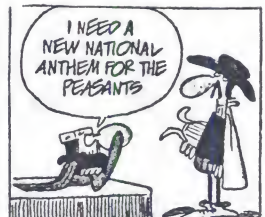
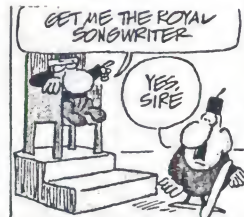
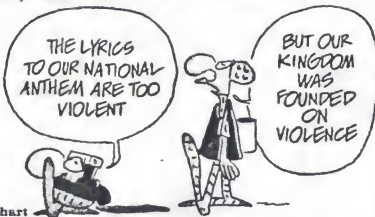


The Words of Kurt Weill, Sung Flat on Her Back



Wizard of ID

Brant Parker and Johnny Hart

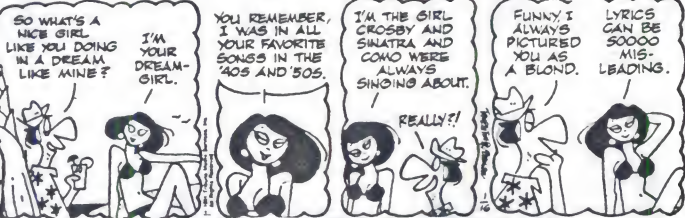
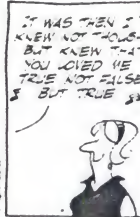
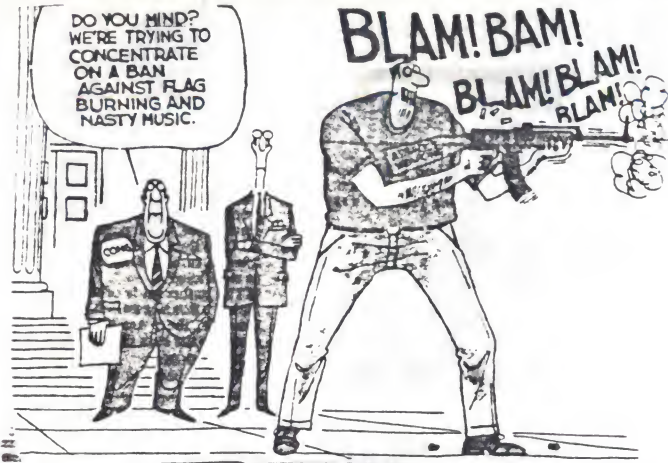
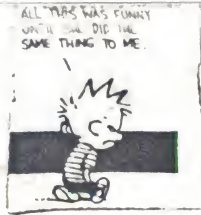


God Bless Us, Everyone

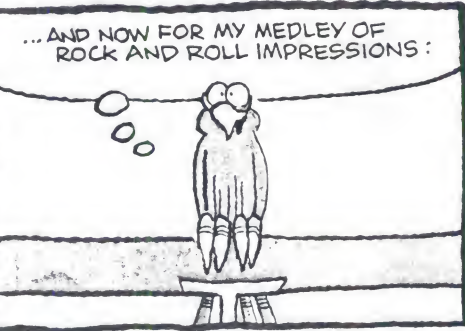
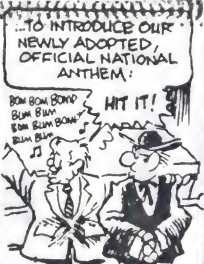
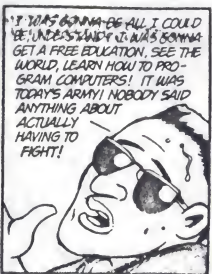
Country singer Lee Greenwood has written a Canadian version of his song "God Bless the USA," and President George Bush hopes the new tune spreads good will between the countries.

Greenwood has composed "God Bless Canada" using the same music but different lyrics of his 1985 hit, said spokesman Dan Bradley.

He has been performing the new song during appearances in Canada.



Cattle drive quartets



In this issue: INDEX to "THAT REAL OLD-TIME RELIGION"

ANAKREON

#50, APA-FILK MAILING #50

1 May 1991 (Beltane 9991)

OVER WHERE?

(Tune: "Over There", by George M. Cohan)

Over there. Over where?
We don't care what's unfair over there.
For the Yanks aren't coming,
We won't go slumming,
We're not succumbing over there.

Over there. Over where?
Send no men, send no cash, send no dare.
For we're sober,
We won't go over,
And we'll all stay home till it's over, over there.

(Yes, I know I've already printed these verses, under a pseudonym, in ANAKREON #26 ~~six~~ years ago. However, the time is past for pseudonyms and the time is come for this song. It's four wars too late for the original words.

(The words "Over where?" should be spoken rather than sung, in an incredulous tone.)

SONG OF THE WEEKEND WARRIOR

(Tune: "Eating Goober Peas")

Once the Army told me that they would pay me well
 If I drilled a little, and learned to fire a shell.
 I could go to college, with all the jocks and nerds -
 And now I'm in the desert, eating camel turds!

CHORUS: Turds, turds, turd, turds, eating camel turds -
 Not what I'd expected, eating camel turds.

All those ads on T. V. gave to me the nerve,
 So for easy money, I joined the Reserve.
 I could get some training in processing words -
 Now I'm in the desert, eating camel turds.

CHORUS:

When those rich Kuwaitis got mugged by Iraq,
 I could not imagine why we should attack.
 Bush went on the T. V., reading fighting words,
 And now I'm in the desert, eating camel turds.

CHORUS:

When they said I would be all that I could be,
 "Mercenary soldier" did not occur to me.
 Now I'm hired to fight for Arabs, Jews, and Kurds,
 And sitting in the desert, eating camel turds.

CHORUS:

I am still in Iraq, though we got a win,
 Though the war is over, the duration's just set in.
 It will be a long time, till we're free as birds,
 And I'm still in the desert, eating camel turds.

CHORUS:

So if somebody tells you, be all that you can be,
 Stomp upon his kidneys until he cannot pee.
 If I'd thought to do that, please believe my words,
 I wouldn't be in Iraq, eating camel turds.

CHORUS:

ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS (SA'UDI VERSION)

by Heather Yukon

A joke currently going around informs us that Sa'udi Arabia has a new national anthem: "Onward Christian Soldiers". Heather Yukon took it from there, with the following verses complete with marginal gestures:

Onward Christian soldiers, marching off to war, (scowl)
 Uncle Sam's crusaders, wading deep in gore.
 We can't slay our brothers, Moslems as are we -
 You provide the blood and bombs and we will pay the fee.
 Onward Christian soldiers, marching off to war,
 Uncle Sam's crusaders, wading deep in gore.

Onward Jewish soldiers, we do not like you. (hold noses)
 Keep the Star of David hidden from our view.
 Soldier sons of Jacob, we must tolerate. (grimace)
 Shed the blood of Zion for the Emir of Kuwait!
 Onward Jewish soldiers, we do not like you.
 Keep the Star of David hidden from our view.

Onward female soldiers of the Infidel,
 Onward, brazen harlots, on your way to hell,
 Driving trucks like western sluts, T-shirts with no veil,
 If we were your husbands we would have you thrown in jail.
 Onward female soldiers of the Infidel,
 Onward, brazen harlots, on your way to hell.

I got these verses from the author at a meeting of the Beaker People Libation Front, in a bar in Greenwich Village on 15 February. She in turn was unaware of the existence of John F. Kendrick's classic parody, "Christians at War," which first appeared in 1913 and has been a fixture in the IWW's Little Red Songbook ever since. ("Onward Christian soldiers! Rip and tear and smite! Let the gentle Jesus bless your dynamite.") I first encountered this song shortly before the outbreak of the Korean War, and ever since I have had all too many opportunities to acquaint new generations of Pacifists with it. They are delighted with it, but it is a pleasure I would willingly forego.

Kendrick's filk of "Onward Christian Soldiers" was reprinted in ANAKREON #14 (14th Mailing of APA-Filk, 1 May 1982) as the first in my "Yesterfilk" series of the filksongs of earlier times. I still have a few copies of this issue on hand, and will send one to anyone who sends a self-addressed, 29¢-stamped envelope.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Nick Smith, 414 N. Mar Vista Ave., Pasadena, CA 91106, sends along a flier announcing Con-Chord 7, a filksingers' con which will take place on 27-29 September 1991 at the Holiday Inn, 9901 La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90045. Full attending membership is \$20 till 10 July 1991 and \$25 to 24 September; supporting membership is \$8. The con committee's address is #110, 1810 14th St., Santa Monica, CA 90404; 213-546-4935. Michael "Moonwulf" Longcor is guest of honor and Juanita Coulson is toastmaster. There will be a performers' circle on Friday night, and concerts Saturday afternoon, Saturday evening, and Sunday afternoon.

*

Sean Cleary writes that his new address is #92, 310 E. Philadelphia St., Ontario, CA 91761; 714-986-1576.

YOU DON'T EVER MESS AROUND WITH SAUDI WOMEN

by Chris Carrier

(Tune: "It Never Rains in Southern California")

Got on board an eastbound C-111
 Didn't think before I signed up
 About what I might have to do
 Oh, they talk about the Saudis
 No broads, no booze, no movies
 It's all true
 Sure is true.

And you never play around with Saudi women!
 Seems I heard all that before
 You don't play with Saudi women
 You don't lay with Saudi women
 You can lose your head
 And you will be dead.

I'm overworked, I'm out of my head,
 I'm out of booze, I'm out of bread,
 I'm underboozeed, I'm undersexed,
 I want to go home!

And you never play around with Saudi women!
 Seems I heard all that before.
 You don't play with Saudi women
 You don't lay with Saudi women
 You can lose your head
 And you will be dead.

Will you tell the folks back home I nearly made it
 The mullah's daughters -- didn't know which one to take.
 Please don't tell them how the Muttawa found me
 Don't tell them how they found me
 Please give me a break
 Give me a break.

'Cause you never play around with Saudi women!
 Seems I heard all that before.
 You don't play with Saudi women
 You don't lay with Saudi women
 You can lose your head
 And you will be dead.

(The Muttawa is a sort of religious partol that goes around Sa'udi towns making sure that everyone's conduct obeys moslem religious law. - JB)

THAT REAL OLD-TIME RELIGION

(thirteenth supplement)

These contributions all came in from Dave Gelbart, who picked them up on a computer net. He got the permission of the person who passed them along, and who wishes to remain anonymous but passes along a blessing

Judy Harrow, a local High Priestess in the Craft, confirms my impression that there are a surprising number of Neo-Pagans in the U. S. armed forces. (As you recall, 96 verses were sent along for ANAKREON #48 by an Air Force officer named Ri Johnson.) Judy helped write the appropriate sections in a military chaplains' manual on what to do for and about the Neo-Pagans under the Pentagon's care. This includes words to be said over a Neo-Pagan who has fallen in combat - presuming, of course, that a large blonde lady on a brewer's horse had not swooped down from the clouds and carried him off already.)

(And is Odhin going to appoint a male Valkyrie to carry off to Valhalla the first female Neo-Pagan to give her all for middle eastern oil?; Or will she instead be given into the care of the ancient Semitic war-goddess Anath, who even sneaked into the Bible in Judges 3:31.)

One of Dave's verses has already been printed as #733, and some are similar to already published verses. His #742 resembles #36, but one line is different, which is good enough for me.

Mark Blackman's index to "That Real Old-Time Religion" begins on p. 7. I have expanded it to include the following verses.

730. Azathoth is in his chaos
We know he's a really big boss
Now if only he don't slay us
Then that's good enough for me.

CHORUS: Give me that old-time religion,
Give me that old-time religion,
Give me that old-time religion,
It's good enough for me.

739. Hari Krishna he must laugh on
To see me dressed in saffron
With my hair that's only half on
And that's good enough for me.

740. If you're really into dancing
And want to try some trancing
Then the voodoo gods are prancing
And that's good enough for me.

741. We will sacrifice to Yuggoth
Light a candle for Yog-Sothoth
If we're good we'll send a Shoggoth
And that's good enough for me.

742. It was good enough for Loki
Where he goes, it sure gets smokey
He thinks Thor's a little hokey
And he's good enough for me.

743. And the gods tore into Loki
Saying, "Dei-cide is hokey,"
So Thor threw him in the pokey
And that's good enough for me.

744. Don't neglect that shrine of Zeus's
Though he's lost his vital juices
Still the old boy has his uses
And he's good enough for me.

745. When we worship Bacchus
The ethanol will sock us
And we'll all get good and raucous
And that's good enough for me.

746. We will venerate old Bacchus
Drinking beer and eating tacos
'Til you've tried it please don't knock
us
'Cause it's good enough for me.

747. Let's all drink to Dionysus
His wine and women beyond prices
He made a Maenad out of my Sis,
And that's good enough for me.

748. Let us dance with Dionysus
And get drunk on wine and spices
The Christians call them vices
but they're good enough for me.

749. It was good enough for Cupid
And the tricks to which he stooped
'Though his wings are kinda stupid,
But he's good enough for me.

750. No one wrote a verse for Buddha
Though I think they really coulda
And I really think they shoulda
'Cause he's good enough for me.

751. There are some who practice Shinto
There's no telling what they're into
Though I guess we could begin to
But that's good enough for me.

752. Warriors for Allah
Are sure to have a gala
Time in old Valhalla
And that's good enough for me.

753. Any time that I start hearin'
"Jesus loves you" I start leerin'
Maybe so, but not like Brirn
And he's good enough for me.

754. And though J. C.'s into fish too
He's an avatar of Vishnu
To he's welcome here to
And that's good enough for me.

755. And for those who follow Cthulhu
We've really got a lulu:

Drop a bomb on Honolulu
'Cause that's good enough for you.

756. Well, it's good enough for Hastur
He's a mighty kinky master
When you pray he goes much faster
And that's good enough for me.

757. Good old Thor's the god of thunder
Really helped us get our plunder
Though his head's still truly dunder
He's still good enough for me.

758. There are those who worship science
And some would send 'em to the lions,
But without 'em we'd have no appliance
So they're good enough for me.

759. In the names of Thor and Odin
Don't you know that there's a war on?
Grab an axe and get your woad on
And it's good enough for me.

760. It was good enough for Odin
Even though that croakin' was forebodin'
Till at last the Giants rode in,
Still it's good enough for me.

(No, I don't know what the word "Brirn" means in #753. Dave was somewhat dubious about the spelling, but I don't even have a clue as to the meaning.)

The next collection of verses for "That Real Old-Time Religion" will take place in ANAKREON #52, whose date of publication will be 1 November 1991 as part of the 52nd Mailing. Please try to get any verses you compose or collect, mailed to me by the middle of October.

GRACELESS NOTES

ANAKREON is a quarterly bulletin of filksinging, published on the first day of each February, May, August, and November by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11226-5302. It is a part of APA-Filk, an amateur press association by and for filksingers, which is collated and mailed out here at those same dates. The copy count of APA-Filk is 60, and the next deadline for contributions is Thursday 1 August 1991.

To receive APA-Filk, just send in a few dollars for postage and packing, and I'll keep you posted on the state of your account. For current details, see "The Ministry of Finance", elsewhere in this issue. ANAKREON also goes to everyone who gets my s-f/fantasy/comic art fanzine DAGON, which circulates through APA-Q, an amateur press association in those fields which is assembled and mailed out from here every fourth Saturday. If you'd like to participate in APA-Q, send \$1.50 for a sample copy and further information.

Mike Stein's D. C. al Fine #11 just missed the last Mailing, for reasons which he explains in D. C. al Fine #12. Both are included in this 50th Mailing, along with 'zines (so far) from Roberta Rogow and Mark Blackman. Unless a cover comes in from someone else at the last minute, this Mailing will have one of my stand-by collage covers, with the date and Mailing number hastily rubber-stamped in at the last minute. To keep this from happening again, send in covers of your own.

"THAT REAL OLD-TIME RELIGION" INDEX

by Mark Blackman

(The author has put some entries in parentheses, indicating modern persons, groups, or other phenomena. Modern gods and goddesses, however, have the same freedom from parentheses as do ancient ones; see, for example, the entries for "Ghu", "Squat", "Hastur", etc. - JB)

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 (Sensi) - 648
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 Sharra - 409
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 (Mother Shipton) - 351
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 (Shoggoth) - 741
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 (Sister Boom-Boom) - 557 passim
 (Slobberia) - 218, 266-272
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 (Wayland Smith) - 633
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 (Yoda) - 231, 490 passim
 (Yuppie Cover) - 626
 (Yojimbo) - 610 passim

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THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

As of 27 April 1991, the postage balances of the following people stand at these values:

Mark Blackman	\$12.06	J. Spencer Love	\$4.17	Beverly Slayton	\$7.54
Steve Brinich	\$13.45	Matthew Marcus	\$16.24	Mike Stein	\$2.76
Harold Groot	\$6.13	Doreen Miller	\$2.21	Peter Thiesen	\$16.47
Cecilia Hatlestad	\$10.20	Pete Seeger	\$1.06	Sol Weber	\$7.09
Cheryl Lloyd	\$5.27	Glenn Simser	57¢		

The space to the right gives the balance in your account, including costs of mailing out this present 50th Mailing. In addition, Mike Agranoff and Roberta Rogov receive complimentary copies of APA-Filk, and the accounts of the following people are combined with their APA-Q accounts: Dave Gelbart, Daniel B. Holzman, Robert Bryan Lipton, Lois Mangan, and Jeff Poretsky. These people will be getting the 50th Mailing of APA-Filk along with the 329th Distribution of APA-Q.

APA-Filk accounts which fall into arrears will be suspended. Presently suspended

(continued on p. 14)

YESTERFILK

XXI. Tie a Yellow Ribbon Around This, Rambo!

For the past several months, the yellow ribbon has been the principal symptom of military madness in this country. People who wear or display them say that they are symbols of support for U. S. troops in the Muddle East. This was discovered by Omar Samman, an American citizen of Jordanian birth, who on 10 February returned to his home in Bloomington, New Jersey to find that his house had been broken into, his windows broken, his furniture slashed - and a yellow ribbon on his television set.

The yellow ribbon originally seems to have been a token worn or displayed by a wife or sweetheart to show that her love was away on military service. In a letter to the New York Times of 17 February, T. R. Snyder, a sometime "Army brat", gives a tradition that apparently goes back to the 19th century. Not long before the Slaveholders' Rebellion, the U. S. Army adopted new uniforms in the blue color that was to become so familiar. Infantrymen wore plain blue trousers, while a stripe down the sides indicated other branches. The best-known were red for artillery, and yellow for cavalry. Snyder mentions "the custom on Western posts of wives wearing some article - usually a ribbon - that signified their husband's branch of service..."

The cavalry was the "glamor" service - and also the most frequently employed in the open spaces and against the highly mobile Indians in the West. The yellow ribbon got most of the attention. But ribaldry frequently entered the picture, and sentimental songs about yellow ribbons developed new verses. This may have been promoted by a custom Snyder mentions; apparently a yellow ribbon displayed outside a house could also mean: "My husband is away with the army. Come on up and talk things over. Bring money." And of course infantrymen and artillerymen were not slow to make up verses poking fun at the more highly regarded cavalrymen.

The best-known of these songs is the familiar "Around Her Hair* She Wore a Yellow Ribbon". Additional verses were then generated by the folk process, so we have:

Around her hair, she wore a yellow ribbon;
She wore it in the springtime in the merry month of May,
And when you asked her why the hell she wore it,
She said it's for her lover who is far, far away.
Far away, far away; far away, far away.
She said it's for her lover who is far, far away.

Variants include "She wore it in the springtime, all in the month of May" or "...and in the month of May." The third line was sometimes more decorously rendered as "And if you ask her why she wore that ribbon." The word "May" makes an easy rhyme, but it should also be recalled that May is the first month of the year in which young lovers could expect to find comfortable privacy in the great out-of-doors. The traditional June wedding probably originates from the lunar surprises that follow those May outings.

Then things got raunchier.

Around her leg** she wore a yellow garter;
She wore it in the springtime in the merry month of May,
And when you asked her why the hell she wore it,
She said it's for her lover who is far, far away...

Around the block she pushed a baby carriage;
She pushed it in the springtime, in the merry month of May,

* - Variants had her wearing it around her neck, her arm, or her leg, the latter as a "yellow garter" sometimes.

** - Or "knee".

And when you asked her why the hell she pushed it,
She said it's for her lover who is far, far away...

Behind the door her father kept a shotgun*
He kept it in the springtime in the merry month of May;
And when you asked him why the hell he kept it,
He said it's for her lover who is far, far away...

And on the wall she keeps a marriage license,
She keeps it in the springtime in the merry month of May;
And when you asked her why the hell she kept it,
She said it's for her lover who is far, far away...

And in his desk the sheriff keeps a warrant,
He keeps it in the springtime in the merry month of May;
And when you ask him why the hell he keeps it,
He says it's for her lover who is far, far away...

The fifth line of each verse is sometimes sung antiphonally, or in different pitches, as if one person says, "Far away," and the other responds, "Far away."

In times when military activity is not a major concern of American young men, colleges pitch in with their variants. The Intercollegiate Outing Club Association (IOCA) Songfest, of which I have a rather battered copy of the 1955 edition, has this song as "Around her hair she wore a purple ribbon...She wore it for her Williams man who's far, far away." As you might guess, the color of Williams College is purple. The verses I've printed above are substantially the same, except for the color of the ribbon and the substitution of "Williams man" for "lover". Additional verses follow; to appreciate them it is necessary to know that the rivalry between Amherst and Williams Colleges is as strong, if not as well known, as that between Harvard and Yale. Yale students are called of old "Elis", and of course the Yale color is blue, in tribute to Cambridge.

And in her heart, she has a secret passion;
She has it for an Amherst man who's not so far away...

And on her face, she wears a blue expression;
She wears it for an Eli man who's far, far away...

And in New York, she keeps a small apartment;
She keeps it for a Princeton man who sees her every day...

I recall that, sometime during the 1950s or early 1960s, someone recorded the version of this song that makes a cavalryman the object of the lady's passion, and omits all the raunch.

In later wars, a household that had men in the service indicated it somewhat differently. In the two world wars, such a home displayed a rectangular white banner with a broad red border. This banner was suspended from its top, and had one star for each man who was off at war - gold if he had died on active service, and blue if he was alive. Companies with employees away at war would similarly indicate them with stars on a larger flag.

If an attempt was made to revive this custom for the Korean War in 1950 I am unaware of it. While the Korean War brought a sudden end to a strong anti-war movement that had started after World War II, it was quite obvious that this was not going to be a war of total national commitment. The public reacted accordingly, and

* - Variant: "Behind the door she keeps a sawed-off shotgun". Sometime the shotgun is on the wall, or in the corner. In this last case it scans as: "And in the corner stands a sawed-off shotgun..." or "...her father keeps a shotgun".

returning veterans got neither parades and free drinks, as after World War II, nor scorn and derision, as after the war with Vietnam.

Some people claim that the immediate inspiration for the yellow ribbons of the past several months was a song recorded in 1973 by Tony Orlando: "Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree". In view of the present connection of yellow ribbons with soldiers, it is interesting to note that the Orlando song had to do with a convict returning home after serving his prison sentence. I am reminded of Dr. Samuel Johnson's remark, that nobody should be picked up for the navy by the press gangs if he had the wit to get himself thrown into prison; in prison you have better food, better accommodations, and meet a better class of people, and don't run the risk of being drowned.

The first appearance of yellow ribbons on American lapels took place in 1979-1981, as an expression of sympathy for the Americans being held in the embassy in Tehran by the Iranian government. There is a grim irony to this, since it now appears that representatives of the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign, possibly including George Bush himself, met with representatives of the Iranian government to persuade them, on consideration of military aid, to hold the U. S. prisoners until after President Carter left office, so that he wouldn't have the credit for obtaining their release. The White House is denying this story in the same tones it used in 1972, when people first began getting concerned about that strange burglary at the Watergate. It would be a grim irony if the first spate of enthusiasm for yellow ribbons turned out also to be based on a hoax.

Later, at a time when some unknown person was killing black youngsters in Atlanta, the National Council of Christians and Jews popularized the wearing of green ribbons as a gesture of concern. It turned out that these murders were being committed not by white racists but, according to Atlanta police, by a mentally disturbed black man. Last year, in New York City, there was a campaign to wear blue ribbons as a protest against an outburst of ethnic bigotry.

And there is another source, besides the ones already mentioned, for the use of yellow in time of war. My parents grew up in a part of the country with a sizable German-American population, and they have informed me that during World War I a popular patriotic enthusiasm was daubing yellow paint on the houses or barns of German-Americans. Apparently there is a long history behind the use to which the yellow ribbon was put in Mr. Samman's home.

In the first flush of enthusiasm after President Bush announced "Operation Desert Storm*", yellow ribbons were being worn by opponents as well as by supporters of the war. Their rationalization was that while they opposed the war, they supported the troops and were working to get them home, safe and quickly. This heresy was quickly put down by the Reverend Cal Thomas, who was vice president of the Moral Majority when there was one, and now writes a column for the New York Daily News. In one of his columns, Reverend Thomas wrote that the troops are a part of the war, and that therefore supporting the troops means supporting the war. I'll go along with Reverend Thomas on that.

In the New York Times of 26 February, Russell Banks tried to draw a distinction between the yellow ribbon and the U. S. flag, which was also used to support the war. He approved of the ribbon as a symbol of concern for the ordinary soldiers, but felt that the flag had become a partisan symbol of an aggressive, flamboyant nationalism. ("...somewhere around Day 12, I started seeing Star-Spangled Banners all over town... It was Veterans Day, July Fourth and Presidents Day** all rolled into one.")

This "Super Bowl mentality" does not enshrine the war, but simply calls the flag into question along with the yellow ribbon. We are going to have to decide whether the U. S. flag is the emblem of all citizens of this country without regard to their viewpoints, or whether it is merely a partisan banner standing only for those people who believe that war is preferable to peace. If the latter is true, the flag is a thoroughly legitimate target for those who believe otherwise, and whose flag has been

* - This means that the soldiers who took part in it can be called "Desert Storm Troopers".

&& - notice how this new-fangled usage puts Fillmore, Harding, and Carter right up there with Washington, Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt.

stolen from them by those who believe that it is only for war-lovers. I'll bring the matches.

This was learned the hard way by Marco Lokar, an Italian who was on the basketball team of Seton Hall University, a Catholic university in New Jersey. Lokar, unlike other members of the basketball team, refused to wear an American flag on his uniform as a gesture of support for war. Since he is opposed to war, he also rejected wearing an Italian flag (as Italy had a few troops in the Gulf region), or even one of those damnable yellow ribbons. Lokar was booed every time he touched the ball, and he and his pregnant wife received death threats. He finally gave up on a country that has so little regard for individual freedom, and returned to Italy.

The Yellow Ribbon Gang tried to make a show on the Brooklyn College campus during the last week of January. Their pro-war demonstration was outdrawn about ten to one by an anti-war demonstration - which has been the usual ratio here when the two rival views went head-to-head. Fraternity men were foremost in the pro-war demonstration, which rather surprised me, since I had thought that frat men were interested only in ethnic snobbery and gang rape. Since the anti-war group had hung a polychrome "Peace Now" banner overlooking the quad, the frats put up banners of their own. A few days later we got a windstorm that blew down all the pro-war banners, or caused their red, white, yellow, and blue colors to run. The "Peace Now" banner stayed in place - in fact, it outlasted the war.

A few days later the war-lovers announced their intention to put a yellow ribbon on every tree on the quad. If you go above sapling level, this would have meant 14 ribbons. They only actually put up four, after complaining that promised financial support was not forthcoming. These gradually went away, probably as a part of demonstrations a couple of weeks later against a massive tuition increase and aid cut.* Oddly enough, the people who are now planning a "Welcome Home" parade up Broadway are making the same complaints about lack of promised financial support. Besides, we don't need Performin' Norman in New York City; we already have John Gotti.

But the best comment on the yellow ribbon madness wasn't made by people at all, but by squirrels. (New York Times, 24 February) They stole ribbons from in front of a house in New Jersey, and built them into their nests. The Times suggests that this may have been a gesture of support for their relatives, the desert rats.

THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (continued from p. 10)

APA-Filk accounts are:

Harry Andruschak	-14¢	Mistie Joyce	\$6.86	Kathy Sands	-12¢
Greg Baker	-91¢	Leslie Lyons	-49¢	Karen Shaub	-73¢
Sally & Barry		Randall McDougall	-65¢	Elliot Shorter	-\$2.00
Childs-Helton	-74¢	Margaret Middleton	-74¢	Nick Simichich	-69¢
Sean Cleary	-38¢	Dena Mussaf	-87¢	Dana Snow	-15¢
Gerald Collins	-10¢	Deirdre & Jim		Rick Weiss	-\$1.25
Paul Doerr	-50¢	Rittenhouse	-15¢	Paul Willett	-\$1.23
Bob Fitch	50¢	Michael Rubin	-82¢		

GETTING CAUGHT UP

Cover #49 (Blackman): I fear that the Duck Soup parody will come due the next time U. S. troops are sent into battle. The decision-making circles in this country have become convinced that a war is something that takes a few weeks, has enormous public support, and results in a cheap victory against a ludicrous enemy. And so it will be tried again, against guerrilleros on the inner slopes of the Peruvian Andes, or on the Caribbean coast of Central America during the rainy season, or for revenge

* - This development was not exactly isolated from the fact that huge amounts of public money have been siphoned out of our pockets to set George Bush alongside Saladin Khan and Tamerlane in Iraqi history.

at long last against Vietnam. And under those conditions the U. S. armed forces are going to be about as efficient as Freedonia's, with no compensating humorous plot line. Hi-de hi-de hi-de-ho.

Singspiel #49 (Blackman): Not only did ergot, a component of wheat smut, cause outbreaks of dancing and other mania during the Middle Ages, but it is chemically related to LSD. You can also make a rough but effective abortifacient out of ergot. This was in cases of failure of what during the Middle Ages was known as the Damsel's Prayer: "O Blessed Virgin who conceived without sinning, grant me the grace to sin without conceiving."

While in action the Slaveholder's Rebellion was a war, in structure it was a large-scale police raid. And when I was writing the verses that appear on page 2 of this issue of ANAKREON, it occurred to me that the rebels had a firmer grasp of the economic realities than the government did, to judge from their songs. Supporters of the union sang about liberty, loyalty, and emancipation. Rebel soldiers sang about cotton, peanuts, and "the property we gained by honest toil" - and we know what that "property" was.

The original "Eating Goober Peas" (for "goobers", or "goober peas", are an old term for this legume) comes in several versions. The last lines of the verse run, in one version:

"The general looks around him, and what do you think he sees?
The Tennessee Militia, eating goober peas!"

This is

O At
P Great
E Intervals
R This
A Appears
T To
I Inflame
O Optic
N Nerves

Another version has "the George Militia", which doesn't scan as well. Why not just submerge these state rivalries by rendering the last line as "The whole Confederate Army, eating goober peas"?

1657

ANAKREON #49 (me): Why pick on Susan Molinari? Because members of Congress whose strings get pulled from the White House are most likely to be Republicans, there are only two Republicans in the New York City congressional delegation, and the other one, while he voted for war, does not have the added satirical liability of belonging to a political dynasty whose elder members cleared the way for him. If the current U. S. annexation of yet more land in northern Iraq blows up in our faces and the war resumes, it will definitely be remembered who supported it.

GRACELESS NOTES

A lot of things I had intended to put into this issue won't be here, partly because they were crowded out by a lot of material about "That Real Old-Time Religion", partly because I want to keep down the mailing weight of the envelopes which will carry both ANAKREON #50 and DAGON #423, and partly because time does not permit. There will be more time in which to prepare ANAKREON #51, so most of that material will be in it.

*

There are a couple more items on variously colored ribbons in recent news. Opponents of the war took to wearing orange ribbons, to remind people about one of the little surprises that the U. S. armed forces sprung on their own troops and on the Vietnamese. Agent Orange, which proves to cause birth defects (unless you happen to be in the business of compensating veterans for service-incurred conditions) was one of these. And, according to Mike Royko's column in the New York Daily News of 7 April, a woman in a Chicago suburb is displaying red ribbons as "her way or expressing sympathy for Kurds and other Iraqi rebels who have been slaughtered by Saddam Hussein and her disgust at what she considers this country's indifference." Well, those "other Iraqi rebels" are those same Shi'ites we were carefully taught to hate when Americans were imprisoned in Iran, and the cry "Save the Kurds!" has a distressing similarity to the cry of "Save the Vietnamese!" thirty years ago. And we all know what came of that.

Despite Royko's misgivings, it now seems that the U. S. plans a permanent military presence in northern Iraq, with the United Nations putting its blessing on a situation it would be powerless to oppose anyhow. (All those barbarian hordes who set up kingdoms in the west end of the Roman Empire some 14 or 15 centuries ago were similarly careful to get the blessings of a powerless emperor in Constantinople.) If the various peoples living in that part of the world can't figure out for themselves that peace is preferable to war, the U. S. Army is unlikely to persuade them.

LARD!

(Tune: "Molly Malone", sort of)

(I first heard this, years ago, from Fred Kuhn; I don't know where he got it. The word "LARD!" is to be sung as a loud, harsh monosyllable.)

In Dublin's fair city, where the girls are so pretty,
'Twas there that I first met sweet Molly Malone.
She wheeled her pig-barrow through streets wide and narrow,
Crying: "LARD!"

She was a pig-monger, and sure 'twas no wonder,
He father and mother were pig-mongers too.
They wheeled their pig-barrow through streets wide and narrow,
Crying: "LARD!"

She died of pig-fever, and no one could save her,
And that's how I lost my sweet Molly Malone.
Now her pig wheels her barrow through streets wide and narrow,
Crying: "LARD!"

ANAKREON #50

John Boardman
234 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11226-5302

FIRST CLASS MAIL

"She wore a yellow what?"

(See page 11)

JERSEY FLATS #24.....May, 1991

Roberta Rogow, P.O. Box 1124 Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

I did it again. I missed another issue of APA-Filk. But I have a very good excuse...I was putting the final touches on FUTURESPEAK: A Fan's Guide to the Language of Science Fiction. The Book is going to press, and will be available from Paragon House in September. Ask for it at your local bookstore.

Once I had sent off the "Query Proofs" and the "Copy proofs", I could get back to the REAL business of Fandom, i.e., Conventions:

CREATION: "The Two Captains" Con in February was a corker. With both Shatner and Stewart on hand, the Trekkers of both Generations were out in full force. The highlight of the festivities was the Summit Meeting between William Shatner and Patrick Stewart. Shatner was SOOOO American, and Stewart was veddy British. Both of them traded Actor Stories, and Set Stories, and answered dumb questions from the audience (which wouldn't let them speak!) and a good time was had by all.

FAN OUT: The replacement for "ClipperCon"; same committee, different name, same location (Hunt Valley Inn, just north of Baltimore). Smaller than had been intended, but a lot of the old-time Trek Con feeling. GoH was Denise Crosby, who really got into the spirit of things at the Masquerade. William Campbell (remember him the Squire of Gothos? as 'Koloth?') does a lot of fund-raising for the 'ctors' Home, and Denise got in on the action...A Very Large Person (I forget the name!) from Beauty and the Beast donated a Very Large pair of bright red boxer shorts, to be raffled off for charity. Denise offered to model them if someone bought them...no takers. Then she offered to do it if EVERYONE chipped in...by the time we were finished, there was \$500 for the Old Actors, and everyone was rolling in the aisles! After all that, winning a Third Prize for Fantasy in the Masquerade was kind of an anticlimax.

LUNACON: I didn't spend much time at my quarter-of-a table in the Dealers' Room; I was far too busy SMOFFing, waving the cover art of the Book around, and having a very long and productive lunch with an agent about the next book, which I don't want to say too much about while I'm still gestating it.

I did get a chance to filk at LunaCon...with Dr. Jane on hand, we got into a really weird vein, and I mean VEIN....sort of gruesome/ose/funny. Every really disgusting, off-beat song got sung. Stuff like Dr. Jane's "Tyrannasaur Lullaby". And a possible editor took some pictures...

BALTICON: More SMOFFing. I didn't even expect to sell any 'zines at this one, and I was a Real Guest. I wound up on four different panels...on "How To Survive Your First BaltiCon"; on "Awards" (since I've never been nominated for one, let alone won one, I could only contribute comments); on "Sexism in Language", which I let Jack Chalker and Nancy Kress fight out for themselves, giving only a few choice comments from time to time; and "How to write a Filk", with Duane Elms, Kathy Mar and Jack Carroll...I was really the Odd Woman Out in that one, being the only pure parodist, and seemingly the only one who Likes Performing.

With all those great filkers on hand, it was only natural that my stomach should decide that this was the time to kick in and revolt at the revolting food I'd been scarfing down at the last four Cons. So I missed most of Kathy Mar's set while I went and dealt with my inner problems. At least I managed to sit through Duane's...and I got back in time to hear Jack Carroll do one of MY songs! A Filker's greatest thrill!

* Jon Erikson - R

NEWS AND REVIEWS: The TV season is gone to the League Beagles...the best shows are not SF but Courtroom Drama. "Law and Order" is probably the grittiest of the lot...with stories that are so close to the headlines that they need Disclaimers! My Father The Actor has been cast as a juror on one show. His comment: "That's the way the System works in New Yor." High praise from one who spent 40 years as a lawyer! His comments on other legal-type shows are unprintable. I happen to enjoy "The Antagonists", which has some pretty snappy dialog and a pair of scrappy adversaries, an Assistant DA and a defense attorney...how long before they wind up in bed, do you suppose? Speaking of bedroom lawyers, there's always "L.A. Law", which is definitely getting steamier. Giving the Diana Muldaur character the shaft (death by elevator) was unkind...and I'm already second-guessing the writers as to how to get rid of three key characters (the actors want to move on to Bigger and Better, like movie contracts).

The best SF this season (always excepting Star Trek: the Next Generation) is "She-Wolf of London/ Love and Curses". The last six episodes took the oh-so-Brit characters to Los Angeles, and the writers decided that since they weren't going to get renewed anyways they might as well get as campy as they could. The result includes take-offs on California "Psychobabble", "Dagnet", "Mystic Pizza", Spy Stories, cable TV stations, and musical tributes to "Batman" and "Mission:Impossible". I only hope someone either gets this thing on video and markets it, or manages to sell another six or twelve episodes...it's a howl, in more ways than one! Find a friend who taped it, and WATCH!

As for the Old Reliable...ST:NG just passed its noble predecessor's 70-something episodes...and it's getting better and better. I especially like the episodes featuring the "side men/women"...the one where Worf discovers he's a Daddy, and the one where Deanna Troi finds out what it's like to be "mind-blind". The Trek novels are pretty good, too, in spite of what the writers are screaming about. They knew when they took on the assignment that Paramount and Richard Arnold were going to muck about with their priceless prose...For this they get money, and kudos. They want artistic integrity, too?

THE REAL WORLD: My comments about the WAR...If ever there was a necessary war, this one was it. Never mind how we got there...anyone who tosses missiles at Israel, for no other reason than to break up an alliance across the desert, deserves to get hit with whatever we can throw at him. The real losers in this mess are the Kurds, who didn't ask for it, and are now caught between American and Iraqi forces... My one gripe (apart from the proliferation of news programs, which Murray watched avidly) was that the Borough Hall next to my library job got a massive attack of Patriotism and blasted our eardrums with super-patriotic music every evening from 4 to 9...but they only use one record (or tape), so we got the SAME music every hour! This went on from the middle of January to the middle of March. Then there was a Council Meeting or something...and the music stopped. Four weeks of "Star and Stripes Forever" is more than enough to show our patriotism.

UPCOMING EVENTS: I'm off on a Trek Cruise in May; Creation Cons in June and August; Shore Leave in July; and WorldCon in September...Catch me there!

No comments to anyone else...Gotta do my final proofs.

SHAMELESS PLUG: Every SF Fan should buy a copy of "FutureSpeak", if only to see if they are mentioned in it.

Keep on Trekkin.....

Roberta Rogow

SINGSPIEL

50th Stanza : APA-Filk #50 / Mark L. Blackman, 1745 E 18th St.
#4A, Brooklyn, NY 11229 / 718-336-3255 / April 10;14, 1991

There was at Arisia, I'm told, a filk, "So Long, Mom, I'm Off to Bomb Saddam". The war, however, did last more than 90 minutes. (We'd paid a month's rent on the battlefield.) // Being on a 10am panel Saturday kept me from the filksinging at Lunacon. // I hear ConCerto's been canceled.

The about-face on war by the '60s generation prompts printing of the following song from the Capitol Steps (that I mentioned a couple of issues ago); the tune is, of course, Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" (complete with pauses):

Once upon a time / You felt a hurt / For a tie-dyed shirt
Slapped in the dirt / - Didn't you?
People used to shout / And say "Watch out, / You're bound to sell out."
But you thought that they were all / - Kiddin' you.

But now you go out to dance / In a yellow tie and polyester pants.
Now you talk like your dad, / Now you wear Madras plaid,
And say "Do you want to / ~~mmm~~ - barbe-cue?"

[Chorus] How does it feel, / Ah, how does it feel
To have a cellular phone / And a Colonial home / Like a suburban drone?
[Harmonica solo]


Ah, you thought that life was meaningless, / Joined the SDS,
You were so impressed / With - Malcolm X,
Growin' marijuana crops, / Burnin' buildings, / Fightin' cops
And - havin' sex.

You used to be so enthused
By Abby and Eldridge and the language that they used.
Now when you see kids march on the evenin' news
You don't go join 'em. / You got too much to lose.
You're conservative now. / You got no time for - Bobby Seale.

[Chorus] How does it feel, / Ah, how does it feel / To be a '90s man,
With a Miami tan, / And be a Dan Quayle fan, / A Republi-can?

& ----- **THE MELODY LINGERS** : Comments on APA-Filk #49 ----- &
COVER: Remember, you're fighting for Kuwait's honor - which is more than she ever did. // Judging from the omnipresent flags, the anti-war sentiment does not seem to have been commonly held, and the troops were sacred cows even to most of those who were against the war.

SINGSPIEL #49: Another reason to like "The Star-Spangled Banner" - some early Christian Scientists campaigned against it as its tune was that of a drinking song.

ANAKREON/John Boardman: Susan Molinari> Absurdly wishful thinking. (In reality it's those who voted against the War who are being punished.) Who would try her & the others for war crimes, the other victors? The US lost Vietnam and Nixon & Kissinger escaped their war crimes. And a World Court verdict against Reagan meant nothing. // The Gulf War did not last long enough, happily, for support to evaporate and protests to grow. (That & the need to censor reporting seem to be the only lessons US policymakers learned from Vietnam.) In fact, there were more songs written in favor of it (like Randy Newman's "Lines in the Sand" & the above anti-Saddam filk)! // ct Cover 48> Thank you. // 47/ct me> Cantabile - ah hah. // ct Stein> Well, Buckley's been known to smoke joints and favors legalization of drugs. // 48/ct y> A certain amount of Lincoln-bashing is a healthy antidote to idolatry. # Needless to say, every "if the South had won" story I've read has it eventually abolishing slavery and siding against the Nazis. // ct Deb> Niven says the "k" in "kzin" is silent. All for now. I'll be at Disclave. 

composed by Mike Stein, P. O. Box 10420, Arlington, VA 22210 (703)241-2927
CompuServe: 71131,2043

So there we were, driving around the Pentagon looking for the visitors' parking so we could go to a meeting about a proposal. We had been told to use a particular door, but the only visitors' parking was on the other side and the shuttle bus didn't go to the right door. We decided to go up to the river entrance, the closest, to call for further instructions. As we approached, we noticed the brass band gathered out front and wondered idly what they were there for.

The woman we were to meet said she'd come down and get us. Meanwhile an older fellow with several stars on his shoulders passed us. Richard said, "That's General Gray, the commandant of the Marine Corps." Suddenly, we found out what the brass band was for. We were informed that we were in a secured area, not permitted to leave the entryway in or out until the Italian defense minister finished with his welcoming ceremony and came in for his meeting. Our contact was not allowed to enter the area either, until it was all clear.

So we stood around for forty minutes, listening to the band play and the cannons salute and watching the big brass go by. In addition to Gray, I spotted General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and saw someone who was addressed as "Mr. Secretary." (I don't think it was Cheney; I believe it was one of the service secretaries.) Finally they pushed us to the far end of the hall so the procession could troop in. There, thirty feet away from us, were the Italian defense minister and two of the five top uniformed military officers in the United States, in the clear line of fire of three people who had never been searched, passed through the metal detector, or had their briefcases sent through the X-ray machine! This is a secured area?!

OVFF

I think I'm going to become known as the Mad Filker. I went to every filk con in the world this year (or at least every one I heard about), including the one in England. Fortunately, OVFF closes the year.

The concom had trouble finding a hotel; the traditional weekend ran up against Ohio State's homecoming football game. The Hilton Inn in Worthington was not a great place for a filk con, to put it mildly. It had very long halls, one elevator at the end of the hall, and more fire doors than the containment lab in *The Andromeda Strain*. Since I had driven in from DC with all my instruments (a 'cello, a keyboard, two acoustic guitars, and a Unisynth guitar synthesizer) plus two belonging to Linda Melnick and Lucinda Brown, plus my suitcase and a humidifier for the instruments, I was not pleased. There were other problems as well, such as the fact that the closet had one (yes, one) hanger - and this problem was not just in my room.

Unfortunately, I got a late start and did not make it in time for the high tea held for the listener guest of honor, Mary Frost-Pierson. By the time I got down to the filk room, some people had already turned in.

Technical Difficulties were originally going to be the musical guests of honor, but between T. J. Burnside's new baby and Sheila Willis's broken ankle, that had to be changed. Instead, we were treated to Linda Melnick's new

group, Musical Chairs, consisting of Linda, Lucinda Brown, and Jean Stevenson, who took one of the Saturday concert slots. Among the others performers were B. J. Willinger, Barb Riedel and Carol Poore Roper, Peter Thiesen, Barry and Sally Childs-Helton, Henry Roberts, and Mary Ellen Wessels O'Cain.

The one-shots were filled and then some - there were fifteen performers and several on a standby list who did not get to go. I didn't even bother signing up, I arrived so late on Friday. The song contest this year was on the theme of aliens, and there were fifteen entries there as well. I sang two of them - Philip Soehnen had a cold and needed someone to do his. Fortunately, it was to a tune I knew. My own *Ballad of the Hubble*, printed below, took third place. Renee Alper's *Alien Landing*, a serious song, took second, while Tom Smith won for the third year in a row with *Facehugger, His Life And Untimely Demise*, a nicely creepy number about the movie *Alien*. Next year's contest theme is Heroes and Heroines.

At the Saturday night filk, the midwestern chaos collision resolution algorithm had an unusual amount of trouble. The room mostly turned into a performers' circle. However, at Bob Laurent's suggestion, I set up well outside the circle to encourage others to feel free to join in. (I also needed a lot of space for my instruments.) Robin Nakkula set up next to me, as we planned to do a couple of duets.

Before the midnight brunch/awards banquet, things went relatively smoothly. Afterward, though, there was some problem coordinating things even within the circle, and it was tough for people outside the circle to get in. Robin tried several times to start a song, and was repeatedly walked on. I know she was at the back of the room, but a Martin 12-string is rather hard to ignore. I got so disgusted that I was just about ready to match tuning and back her with my own Martin 12, which can drown out anyone short of Juanita Coulson. It took the efforts of a couple of audience members to get the circle to let her in. When I tried to follow a song, announcing a "follower", B. J. Willinger pointed to Peter Thiesen. I acquiesced, as Peter's a pretty quiet guy, and if someone notices he's been waiting to play for a while, then he's really been waiting to play for a while. However, B. J. then grabbed the next song, which did not follow the topic. One other person in the middle of the room looked like he wanted in, but he was totally intimidated and waited until the filk was pretty well dead. Pity; he was a fine classical guitarist. Perhaps part of the problem was the lack of an overflow room.

The attendance appeared to be well over a hundred. Many of the people were just there to listen.

The Pegasus awards were a source of contention. This year one of the nominees for best filksong was Fred Small's *Cranes Over Hiroshima*. A number of people thought it wasn't really a filksong even though some filkers perform it. However, T. J. Burnside-Clapp's *Lullaby* took the honors. The award was accepted by T. J. herself, who changed her mind and brought Mitch and the baby. T. J. took Best Fannish as well for *Weekend-Only World*. Julia Ecklar picked up both Best Writer and Best Literature for *Daddy's Little Girl*. Best Performer was Mitchell Burnside-Clapp.

IT TAKES A HEAP O' MONEY TO MAKE A HOUSE A HOME

At least around here. Barring extreme misfortune, by spending more money than I ever thought to spend, and going deeper into debt than I ever thought to go, on the 15th of March I will take possession of a three bedroom, one and a quarter bath "stately brick colonial" (that from the listing agent's puffery) at 2819 S. Arlington Ridge Rd., Arlington, VA, 22202, in the Oakcrest neighborhood right on the Arlington/Alexandria border. (The P. O. box will remain in use.)

Due to the recession, it has become a buyer's market even in northern Virginia, the most expensive real estate in the DC area. Even so, there is a lot of trash on the market for outlandish prices. There are problems with the house I'm buying - the roof needs reshingling, it's on a semi-major street, and there are a lot of cosmetic things that need fixing - but the house is fundamentally sound, very nice inside, and examination of the market on the surrounding houses indicates that I'm getting a bargain. (I never thought I'd say that about something that costs \$165,000.) The house is part of an estate, and the heirs were really sick and tired of it - they even agreed to pay two points and throw in some of the furniture. It had been on the market for well over a year. The first listing agent was inexperienced and grossly overpriced it at \$289,000, and the cosmetic defects on the outside probably made a lot of people pass it by without looking, thinking the roof was so bad the inside had to be a mess as well. It was only because my agent's partner was the listing agent that he was able to tell me that no, the problems were all on the outside.

I expect to get on a first-name basis with the folks at Hechinger's, our local hardware supermarket. While \$289,000 is still a pipe dream, with about \$10,000 in repairs, improvements, and redecorating, and a lot of elbow grease, I think the house will be worth at least \$200,000 in two years. But don't be too impressed - back in Michigan I could have bought two or three houses like this for the same price, and they would have been on quiet streets.

I will have some help paying the mortgage. A friend will move in with me in May, after her lease is up. She's tired of leaky roofs at her apartment, and it will be much closer to her job. The big question is whether her two cats and my two cats can get along. At least there are three levels for them to spread out over.

WAR IN THE GULF

As I write this, Saddam Hussein has made good on his spoiled-child threat that if he can't have Kuwait, nobody else will either. Several oil wells are on fire, and the oil slick in the Persian Gulf is thirty miles long and growing.

Which brings up the question: how can you fight a monster like that? Notice that I do not say madman; Saddam's actions are perfectly rational in a hideously evil way. He knows that he can use civilian populations as human shields; our scruples will not permit us to engage in indiscriminate bombing even though Hussein has no problems sending inaccurate missiles into populated areas with no military value. As I feared, it looks like the campaign to free Kuwait will end up destroying that which it was supposed to save.

I am also disheartened by the stupidity of the Arab masses in Jordan and elsewhere who support Saddam. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that his rhetoric about fighting for the Palestinians is just that. Saddam is fighting for Saddam first and last. Back in July, the demand was that Kuwait had to stop stealing Iraqi oil and producing too much, not that Israel had to get out of the occupied territories.

I get some small comfort (very small) from observing that our military has learned something about running an operation since Panama and Grenada. Perhaps it's just because this time they took the opponent seriously. The bombing campaign does not look like it will bring Saddam to his knees, but it will destroy supplies and sap morale of the soldiers subjected to constant bombardment. And wonder of wonders, the weapons actually seem to work.

It looks like it will be politically impossible to do the intelligent thing to save lives. That would be to avoid a direct confrontation with the Iraqi army but instead to encircle them and sit for as long as it takes - years, if necessary - saying, "When you're tired of trying to eat your tanks, come talk to us." Of course, this will lead to widespread suffering among the Kuwaiti civilian population. But that's happening already.

Emotionally, my gut reaction is for going after Hussein. He's proven that he is an utterly evil man who deserves every punishment that can be visited upon him. The use of poison gas on the Kurds and Iranians (in a war he started), Scuds fired indiscriminately at Tel Aviv - this is someone even a devoted peacenik can learn to hate. But intellectually, I know that this is a no-win war for us. Oh, we can destroy the Iraqi army and perhaps even capture or kill Hussein. But Kuwait will be in ruins, thousands of innocents will die before one hair on Saddam's head is mussed, the Persian Gulf fouled for years, and we'll still be the villain to the Arabs.

Recently I had the opportunity to play chamber music with someone who owns an early Stradivarius violin. It is indeed an amazing instrument. Maybe I should have gone into law instead of computers.

* * * * *

C O U N T E R P O I N T

Mark Blackman - (ct John Boardman) Saddam Hussein already has his own moustache. Shortly after the Iraqi invasion, *The Economist* had a cover which touched up a photo with a Hitler-style version. (ct me) A suitable filk has already done to the tune of *Circles* ("And around, and around, and around goes the luggage....")

Deb Wunder - (ct Mark Blackman) Of course the sheriff knows what obscene is. He shaves every morning, doesn't he?

John Boardman - Glad to see someone's taken renewed interest in ROTR. I meant to contribute a verse or two this year but got sidetracked. What were those gods/goddesses you mentioned a year ago who had no verses? I recall they were virtually unrhymable, which tempts me to try. I suspect the final line of verse 721 should read, "Mais c'est bon a mon avis" (Literally: "But it's good in my opinion"). Not only is this idiomatically and grammatically correct

emendation closer to the usual English verse ending, but "Mais c'est non mon avis" is very ungrammatical. That meaning would be expressed as "Mais c'en n'est pas mon avis." But really, the English tag line can be perfectly matched by the (slightly nonidiomatic?) line "Mais c'est assez bon pour moi" if one doesn't mind not rhyming with the original English.

* * * * *

Jane Mailander wrote lyrics for a filk song based on Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* which was set to music by Brenda Sinclair Sutton. Bob Kanefsky did a parody directed at Jane. However, I suddenly had a vision of how Jane's final line could be kept intact with a far different intent....

The Hound of the Shakespearevilles
Words copyright 1990 by Michael P. Stein
Music copyright Brenda Sinclair Sutton

Rodrigo the rake, dark and wild as the storm,
Chased a maiden for many a night.
The cry from the boor brought her dad to the door,
Who then turned to discover her flight.
His darkling companion who followed him found
Plots thickening in his cruel head.
The fool with the ebony skin would be bound
To believe what the base villain said.

Othello is calling for Cassio's blood,
Passing all jealous rages before.
If you value your life, there's a reason, my friend.
For God's sake, keep away from the Moor!

Othello was loved both in peace and in war,
Fought bravely whenever the need.
But his bold heart grew faint when his wife was called whore,
And the green-eyed beast started to feed.
One night in an alley near Bianca's back wall
Came a cry and the charge of the rake.
And now Michael is wounded, Rodrigo dead; all
This the work of the tongue of that snake!

His wife, Desdemona, is pretty and young,
And she laughs at his worries and fears,
But he's swallowed a crock from Iago, the scum,
'Cause his old handkerchief disappears (what a putz!).
He tries to maintain nothing's wrong back at home,
But the noise I hear chills me with fright.
It's the cry of the lady, and she's all alone
Walking out with the Moor late tonight!

composed by Mike Stein, P. O. Box 10420, Arlington, VA 22210 (703)683-5635
CompuServe: 71131,2043

So it's three days before settlement, and everything is going so smoothly I can't believe it. The roofer finished the job on time and budget; the utilities are taken care of; my property insurance is lined up; the money's in the bank waiting for me to get a cashier's check. Just as I'm about to leave for work, the phone rings. It's my attorney. Would you believe the will was never probated? That therefore the title is not clear?

The scare was sharp but short. The next day the title insurance company decided it would issue coverage anyway. All that's left now is to get the report from the termite inspection, provided by the sellers. Guess what? Termites! Call in the exterminators (exterminators?), and call in the carpenter to replace the damaged wood. I arrive at the house just as the carpenter is putting in the last replacement floorboards, and am annoyed to discover that he did not stagger them. The repair will be visible. If they had consulted with me prior to starting, I would have paid the extra money it would take to make the job right, not just adequate. Now it would cost about \$400 to redo it correctly. Next time I buy a house, I'll put into the contract language giving me the right to supervise and approve repair work.

The house across the street sold shortly after I settled, and I met the purchasers, Harvey and Jerry. They were over at the house waiting for someone when I went over and introduced myself. I also met Elsie next door. They both told me something very distressing. It appears there's a real undesirable element in the neighborhood. Now I'm stuck with it. Sad but true, folks - my lot shares a corner with the house of Sen. Jesse Helms.

Due to moving, I only made Saturday night at Balticon. Lindy Sears finagled the committee into inviting Kathy Mar as filk guest of honor. Duane Elms came down, as did another Apafilker who will no doubt have more to say. I found out only at the last minute that I was scheduled for a concert slot. Fortunately, I seem to be getting familiar enough with my own songs that I can give a reasonable performance with just a little brushing up.

The Housemates From Hell have not finished making my life miserable. The day I came over with the U-Haul, I discovered that my lawnmower had disappeared from the garden shed. I can't prove anything, but.... When I tried to use my computer one last time before packing it, I got a "Keyboard Data Line Failure" message. I noticed something strange on the keys. When I picked up the keyboard and tilted it, liquid ran out. One of the drunken bums who hangs around the house spilled beer in it! (Finding out which one is going to be difficult, as there are so many.) I took it apart and cleaned it, but it still has problems. It looks like I'll have to buy a new one. They still owe me over \$600 not counting anything for the damaged keyboard.

For the past couple of months I've been working independently on unpaid leave from PAI. Lois, my supervisor, was forced out. Ostensibly, it's because the division was being closed. However, Lois thinks it's because of her health problems - because of her, we couldn't get cheaper health insurance. It left a bad taste in my mouth and hers. She took with her the Sandoz business she brought in, and I worked directly for her to finish it. I'm also doing some documentation work, as well as some freelance 'cello jobs.

By the time you read this I'll have changed jobs. A company called PRC has hired me to work on a Navy contract for a system to track ships, subs, planes, etc. I'm not averse to military work per se; I dislike government contracts in general. They have so much more idiocy associated with them. However, I'll have an opportunity to learn some new technology.

My old flame Suella came into town to visit in March. We spent an afternoon together. I took her over to the new house to show it to her, and she approved of it highly. She has one and a half more years to go in Morocco. She gave me some interesting information on what had been going on there. The local press had been repeating Saddam Hussein's lies, and the papers go to bed early. Thus the first day after the ground offensive began, the Moroccans were told Iraq was winning great victories. The next day they learned Iraq had accepted all UN resolutions and was withdrawing. They couldn't believe it. Suella was very happy that visa applications were down.

Speaking of events in the Persian Gulf, I would like to believe that it's all over and that we've won. However, we're now talking about a permanent military presence in the area. I am grateful that the Iraqi army decided that the cause wasn't worth fighting for, and surrendered to the first Westerner they saw (journalists in at least two cases). The war could have been much bloodier, both for us and them. As it was, we'll never know for sure how many poor Iraqi bastards died for a cause they didn't believe in, for fear of reprisals against their families. It's bad enough that Saddam held foreigners hostage, but holding his own people hostage is even worse.

* * * * *

C O U N T E R P O I N T

Mark Blackman - (ct me) Unfortunately, I didn't get the names of the other two filkers. Someone else suggested Mike Browne; Rubin I don't recognize. (re Hawaii bid) I don't think it was just yuppie SMOFs who supported Hawaii. It was my second choice, and had I known about SF's hotel problems it might have been my first. I've heard doubts expressed about Phoenix's ability to run a con. (re Assad) Too true. (re slut) It's in my word processor's standard dictionary. (re Civil War) As I read the Constitution, I am forced to conclude that the Confederacy was a sovereign nation. While their motives for wanting to secede were utterly base, their legal right to do so cannot be denied from anything I have been able to find in our nation's basic law. (For some reason John Boardman concludes from this statement that I think secession was a good thing and the abolition of slavery ought to be reversed.)

John Boardman - I did not have too much faith in the Post Awful; I had too much faith in my ability to get the thing photocopied on Saturday, coupled with too little faith in your ability to collate immediately. (ct Deb Wunder) I wonder if Allen had read the van Loon? (re "my" "Lincoln bashing") To my great amusement, you failed to recognize that every one of "my" criticisms of Lincoln only repeated arguments you yourself had used in other contexts, substituting Lincoln's name for Reagan or Bush. (I thought for sure you'd catch on when I quoted directly your line about slavemasters with peculiarly-shaped pieces of metal on their shoulders.) I look forward to a long and lively argument between John Boardman, staunch pacifist, and John Boardman, abolitionist militarist. May the better man win. If you will take the trouble to read what I actually wrote rather than what you have deluded yourself into thinking I wrote, I questioned neither the rightness of the rebels' defeat nor suggested the advisability of its reversal. What I did question was the morality of the means used to defeat the rebels, especially the use of a draft. If you think this implies an endorsement of slavery, then you must also believe that criticizing police brutality is "really" an endorsement of robbery, rape, and murder. And if you believe the question of the morality of using military force to prevent secession is settled and ought

never to be discussed again, talk to some Lithuanians or Latvians. (ct me/10) Again, I must congratulate you on the truly brilliant method you have discovered of saving time by writing mailing comments without bothering to read what you're commenting on. I shall leave it to the other readers to decide whether evidence of my "enthusiasm" for the Persian Gulf war is to be found in anything I wrote, or only in your fevered imagination, which now appears to have succeeded in cutting its last link with reality. If "gloomy prediction" and "no-win war" express enthusiasm, John, will you please let me know what language I might employ in the unlikely event that I might ever wish to voice a small reservation about a war? I freely confess to an emotional desire to see the wicked receive the just rewards of their actions. If this sentiment betrays some horrible moral failing, you are welcome to make the most of it. I also confess to a desire to see the innocent protected from death and suffering. As I said in #11, I do not want to see countless innocents, regardless of nationality, gunned down to get to the guilty party. My positions are not contradictory; rather, there is an order of precedence. (Moral calculus is always sticky when one can save one group of innocents only at the expense of another group of innocents.) You are right that we do not have the resources to protect the world. But that is a pragmatic argument, not a moral one; as a matter of logic it does not necessarily follow that one ought not try to offer protection in any individual case. Or do you convert this to a moral argument similar to the plutocrat's claim that because you do not have the resources to help every poor person, it would be unfair to help any? The New York police officer you mention has no legal justification to go to Colorado. But if s/he has moral justification to chase mass murderers in NYC, then I will argue that s/he has he has the moral justification to chase mass murderers anywhere, regardless of arbitrary and imaginary lines drawn on a map by politicians. I would be most interested in hearing any argument you may offer as to why mass murder is only immoral, or chasing murderers only moral, when done in NYC - or perhaps what you are saying is that Coloradans are less deserving of protection than New Yorkers? (Why stop there? Why should people from Manhattan protect people in Brooklyn? Why should people on 20th St. protect people on 19th St.? These dividing lines have exactly as much moral relevance as the borders of Colorado and New York City.) Now, if the moral basis of your objection is that it's wrong to involuntarily impoverish or send to die in battle poor Americans to protect rich Kuwaitis (or even rich New Yorkers to protect poor Coloradans) then why not say so and have done with it? That is a reasonable and defensible position to take. It is my own, despite my visceral desire to see Saddam Hussein suffer for his villainy. (Before you claim it as your own, though, be aware that if taken to its logical conclusion this position requires the elimination of the Peace Corps and all other nonmilitary forms of government-sponsored foreign aid as well as the military sort; US taxpayers cannot produce enough dollars to develop all the poor nations of the world even if we kick in our entire military budget. For that matter, New Yorkers cannot produce enough dollars to protect even New Yorkers from mass murderers; is this an argument for the abolition of the police force?) In any event, however, this position is not the same thing as pacifism.

Note to Pete Seeger - Are you aware that you objectify women? Such is the opinion of *The Oberlin Review*, if one believes the report found on page 22 of the February 18th issue of *The New Republic*. Sorry, I have no further details.

* * * * *

Here's an old song that I've never printed here before, but am rather fond of.

Real Soon Now

Words and music copyright 1987 by Michael Stein

1 2
 Little girl wakes in her lonely room;
 1
 Stares at the moonbeam shadows.
 2
 Wishing for a unicorn to come real soon,
 1
 To take her far away,
 E A D A
 To a land of candy gardens, where the playing never ends.
 E A G;Gmaj7 A
 Where the air is filled with laughter, and the world is full of friends.

2) Young girl lies in her quiet room,
 Stares at the vacant ceiling.
 Hoping for an elf-lord to come real soon,
 To take her far away,
 To a green enchanted forest, where there is eternal spring,
 Where the sun is always shining, and her heart at last can sing.

3) Young woman stands in her barren room,
 Gazing out the open window.
 Waiting for her prince who will come real soon,
 To take her far away,
 To a fairy-tale castle, where there's music and there's light,
 Where the ball goes on forever, and there's never a lonely night.

4) Old woman sits in her chilly room,
 Listening to the wall clock ticking,
 Praying for death to come real soon,
 And take her far away,
 From the empty, aching silence, from the loneliness and pain,
 From the wasted years of waiting for a life that never came.

5) Tall grass hides a forgotten mound,
 Cov'ring an unmourned passing.
 There stands the unicorn she never found
 While hiding in her room.
 But then no one ever told her you don't need a prince or elves;
 All the power to make it happen can be found

D
 Where it ever was,
 A e A e 1 2 3 2 A
 Within ourselves, deep within ourselves, within ourselves.

Eight note alternations:

- 1) A on D string up to E on G
- 2) G up to D (same strings)
- 3) F up to C (same strings)